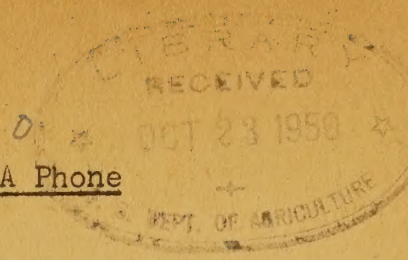


UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Rural Electrification Administration

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Virginia Farm Couple to Get Call from President on First REA Phone



The city girl who married her country boy sweetheart and her husband, an Air Corps veteran, today are in a fair way to find themselves one of the most talked about rural couples in the United States.

They are Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Dickinson, RR 1, Fredericksburg, Virginia, the first rural family in the country to get telephone service as a direct result of the new REA telephone loan program.

As a result, they will receive a call from President Truman in the ceremonies to be held on "REA Telephone Day" at the Fredericksburg Agricultural Fair on Wednesday, September 20.

Since the Fredericksburg and Wilderness Telephone Company installed the line and a dial phone to give the couple their first telephone during their five and a half years of married life, the Dickinsons have discovered that it's just one thing after another, most of them new and different.

The modern luxury trailer which is their home has suddenly been invaded by reporters and photographers, magazine writers and technical editors. Newsreel and television crews are on the way and the Dickinsons are beginning to wonder when they are going to find time to devote to the operation of their 40 herd dairy farm.

The happy accident which made the Dickinsons the first farm family to get service from the company coincides with the Fredericksburg and Wilderness Telephone Company's cutover to modern rural telephone service, the first REA telephone borrower in the United States to do so.

All the attention which followed his telephone installation was far from Eugene Dickinson's mind when he applied for new service. As a farmer directing operations on a 130 acre dairy farm he was moved by more practical considerations.



He wanted to be able to call the veterinary whenever he needed him and carry on the other business details of modern farm life. Without a telephone, this would require endless trips by car and consequent loss of time and money.

The welfare of his 40 head of registered Guernseys was also uppermost in his mind. Dickinson is one of the leaders in the Spotsylvania County artificial insemination movement. The group's technician and headquarters are located in Fredericksburg. Dickinson feels he needs modern telephone service to make full use of this improved method of cattle breeding.

Only a couple of days after getting his new telephone, Dickinson had a graphic demonstration of its potential value. While loading heifers for exhibition at the Fredericksburg Agricultural Fair, an excited cow struck him on the arm with her horns and raised an ugly bump which at first looked like a fracture. Had the injury been more serious, the new telephone would have enabled him to summon medical aid without delay.

The Dickinson farm home is a trailer. But the word "trailer" is a masterpiece of understatement. The 33-foot mobile apartment has every built-in gadget to delight the heart of a housewife. Mrs. Dickinson is still finding built-ins which she did not know existed. Some of the improvements include shower, refrigerator, sink, stove, oil heat and of all things, air-conditioning. There's electricity, of course, and it only needed the addition of the new dial phone to show that modern farm living has everything.

What does city girl Mrs. Dickinson think about it? She loves it.